

FEATURING WORKS  
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# THE NOISELESS SPIDER

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## Statement of Editorial Policy

The editorial board of *The Noiseless Spider* agrees with Henry Miller that the pangs of birth relate not to the body but to the spirit. It was demanded of us to know love, experience union and communion, and thus achieve liberation from the wheel of life and death. But we have chosen to remain this side of Paradise and to create through art the illusory substance of our dreams. In a profound sense we are forever delaying the act. We flirt with destiny and lull ourselves to sleep with myth. We die in the throes of our own tragic legends, like spiders caught in our own web.

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**Naked Trees**

—*Nancy Raver*

## Night City New Year's Eve

From here  
You cannot see the water.  
I hold a glass of wine.  
I never liked it.  
In the next room, children see  
The year reviewed;  
The men that died, shot again,  
Dead again.  
In the kitchen the killer-guard-dog menaces,  
Barking across  
The stillnesses of light,  
The lightnesses of talk.  
I drink my glass of bitterness  
    and I can imagine the city now.  
Sparkling, set in obsidian waters,  
The people waiting for another year to live.

— *Esther M. Friesner*



## Statues of Liberty

In the harbor sits a lone woman,  
In the museums sit lone women.  
Pedestals of wood, concrete, marble sweat,  
And man's imitation of man.  
All free, all alone,  
All nonexistent.  
Confederate general of the deep warm South,  
Wading in pigeon shit for 100 years.

— *James Christopher Cox*

## Haiku

steady caravan  
a thousand little blind snails  
drink from oasis

— *Karen Kmetzo*

## Jelly Fish

when one idle august swelter  
the sun melted like butterscotch  
candy and my world was as small  
as the pretty shells i caressed  
in my hand, i spied you hugging  
the grainy earth like a dead fly  
stuck to a wall, while the fingertips  
of the sea worked to pry you loose  
child curiosity dared me  
to poke at you with a long stick  
hoping to ease your runny  
egglike body back into the dark  
mystery water before  
the monster in you could creep  
any further up my spine  
but the rubbery hardness of your  
watery-looking flesh startled  
my innocent intentions  
bouncing back at me like raw liver  
resisting a dull knife—i threw  
the contaminated stick aside

now  
beneath the velvet shadows of dawn  
the monster, emerging once more  
clever as a chameleon  
wears his nakedness like a mask,  
fine silk white threads, a mile  
of thin bloodless veins delicately  
embroidered into a network  
of stop-sign design pretending  
like gauze to hide a nasty  
brown-red bruise below, weeping  
like a festering sore  
but i cannot be tricked by this  
subtle disguise to bargain your  
fate, abandoned here on the shore  
of my island solitaire  
like an orphaned child useless to yourself  
when hungry gulls test you with needle  
beaks, the sun like a 1000-watt  
bulb baking you hard as marble  
stone

—*Karen Kmetzo*





**Woman**

— *Tim O'Brien*



## **Bioluminescence**

the spirit rises out  
    of the dampened ground  
it floats aimlessly across  
    the luminous sky  
obstacles become transparent  
    visions (images)  
the sky is a rainbow  
    of colors  
hot—cold—bright—dark  
    the contrast is so  
vivid and real . . .  
the spirit softly  
    returns to its darkened  
hiding space where  
    it patiently awaits  
its next journey . . .

— *Michele Klotzer*



## Suicide Sue

I knew I would not make it through the summer. The heat made the breathing intolerable and leadweight heavy. One slash, one long silver slash, and I could leave into another dimension. It would be so fine to see daylight that wasn't so bright and darkness that wasn't so threatening. Was that really so much to need?

When your confusion is scattered, either here or there, it's horrid, but at least you have a choice as to which way you want to go. When your confusion is intangible, neither here nor there, it's worse because you don't even have a foundation to stand on. Do you know what is worse than being so tired that you can't stay awake? It's being so tired of living that you're devastated by waking up.

It's not wrong to want to surround yourself with yourself. It's not grotesque to want to engulf yourself with the liquid that pumps through your body. The desire to smear yourself with your own blood is really quite basic. If it will not sustain you from within, perhaps it can provide an external warmth.

The razor in my palm looked small and shiny as I squeezed it tightly in my hand. As I paced back and forth seeking some comfort in the dirty blue walls, a fury broke within me. Every minute of pain that I had ever felt seemed to come pouring out. I came face to face with the quiet rage that had been cultivating inward for so long. The razor came down cutting the blue veins that ran across my arm. It was a strange type of stabbing, slashing, seering motion that stung like iodine. The blood gushed out over my body making the nylon dressing gown stick to my legs like summer sweat. I put my arm to my eyes wanting to fill my sight with the knowledge of my life's liquid. It was warm and tingly. The sting was gone and I left this earth wrapped up in a scarlet blanket of my own life's blood that no longer ran through my being.

—*Deborah Burns*



## Barroom

You lay down your money  
The game is on—  
    balls knocked hard into holes  
    hour after hour  
    pistachio-stained hands.

On barroom stools  
    reflection of a fool  
    who bartered love  
    for a movie you saw as a child about  
    how to be a man.

Like imitation colors on the T.V.  
    you forfeit sensitivity  
    as you order another  
    (your beer and your women)

Shivering in the draft as Charlie yells,  
    “Last call!”

The wake of life  
    you walk to your car  
    let down again  
    like from lottery tickets  
    you’ve bought.

— *Janice Berube*



## Offices

I left college and commenced to stare out of windows  
for five years now  
from swivel chairs in offices, smelling,  
coffee-beaned, bitter, broken-nailed,  
hump-backed, shifting fat-canned and restless  
for the freedom hour.

My days of confinement are spent left-brained,  
automatic and professionally in foreign clothes  
I can't go out and play in.

Frustration clutters concentration  
I appear dumb, distant,  
detached from 8 to 5,  
my soul eroding,  
my degree deceased  
and rotting at home in the closet.

Offices are NOT aesthetic  
My job is NO fine art  
So much for alternatives, clenched fists  
and piles of broken pencils.

My thoughts are touring Europe  
My fingers are typing memos and  
charts and envelopes and  
all things absurd  
And all I want to do is mate  
men and words  
And all I want to do is mate  
men and words  
And all I want to do is mate  
men and words

— *Janice Berube*



**Rescue from Desolation**

—*Tim O'Brien*

## Time for Thought

"I have been wrestling with a perplexing offshoot of the study of relativity: how fast is time itself moving? My first inclination was to guess a speed equal to that of light, but the solution did not make sense. I have since run myself raggedly around in circles and cannot for the life of me make anything of this riddle. How should I proceed with my efforts?"

"Why, by looking at the clock, of course."

"Very good, but how will that assist me?"

"Well, can you not postulate an hour ago as easily as an hour hence?"

"Indeed, Socrates."

"And perhaps just as easily a day ago or a day ahead?"

"Certainly."

"And so with a year, decade, century, or millennium?"

"It would seem quite logical."

"Time must even have existed prior to the Creation, if you choose to believe in one; for surely, if there be a God who created the universe, that very act would presuppose that He existed beforehand. Indeed, even if a time,  $T_0$ , can be postulated, is it not still within our capabilities to deduct an hour from that point? Accordingly, even if the world should cease to exist, would not time continue thereafter?"

"It would seem, Socrates, that you are suggesting that 'there's no beginning, there'll be no end,' that the scale of time, like the number scale, goes on indefinitely in either direction."

"Excellent. And now, tell me whither that argument runs."

"Sir, I fail to catch your meaning."

"Well, you agree that there is an infinite measure of time running ahead of us and an infinite measure of time behind us. But what is the midpoint of the number scale?"

"Why, it is zero, Socrates."

"And the midpoint between the past and the future?"

"You must mean the present."

"But do you not therefore see that in this 'present' moment, we have postulated an equal, infinite balance of time before us and behind us. What would come if we attempted the same celebration tomorrow?"

"An identical conclusion."

"And a year from now? Or ten years?"

"Why, even a year ago we might have reached the same result!"

"So what can you realize?"

"We live our lives in a present which exists infinitely on the midpoint of time."

"The moment of my birth . . . ?"

". . . was the midpoint of time."

"The moment of my death . . . ?"

". . . will be on the midpoint of time. You have convinced me that the two may be seen to occur in the same instant."

"Then you have a solution with the following prospect: that time itself never moves. It is rather the mortal mind that moves through time and creates an illusion that the planes of reference are reversed."

"Wonderful! I thank you for this explanation, Socrates."

— *Lenny Cavallaro*



## Song of the Prado Museum

Velasquez, robed in light,  
Saw gods and painted monsters.  
From the Royal Court he extracted the glittering bone  
And dressed it in artist's colors,  
Covered it with somber draperies.  
Behind him as before him, he saw all,  
Vision grown with grapes,  
Vision of lame gods, deformity made immortal.  
Behind him, before him, he saw  
And painted with tenderness on a canvas woven of pain  
The royal she-beasts,  
The little princess sepulchered in silks.  
The tourists pass by  
Seeing themselves alone in the dying mirror.

— *Esther M. Friesner*

A moment      quite alone  
A wingless  
                 gliding  
                 flight  
Embalmed  
                 restored  
                 cleansed  
                 sown  
Unseeing, in a night  
Of undisturbed  
                 accord  
Of peace  
                 of passion  
                 of falling  
On the sword.

— *Elia V. Chepaitis*

## The Second Game

In the late innings of the first game  
the sky darkened and the lights came on.  
Between games, believe it or not,  
the entertainment was by Woody Herman  
and his Thundering Herd. It drizzled  
as the second game began, and two  
fast rookies, one a lefty, held back  
the rain with three good innings each.  
But then it came good, and me  
and my aged father scrambled out the box  
and huddled in the runway  
trying to keep dry.

The ump behind the plate waved  
the fielders in. They grabbed their caps  
and chugged straight for the clubhouse  
for towels and some four-handed gin—  
except for the big lefty on the mound,  
who took his time, who slumped back  
on the bench and watched the rain  
pouring through the lights overhead  
dreaming his dream of shutting  
the door for six more.

On the field  
a couple kids capered. One  
somersaulted all the way from  
short left, past second, and  
into right. Three special cops waited  
as he tumbled past the foul line  
and into their arms.

Back in left a couple more kids  
were doing their stuff, the fat round  
specials waiting till the kids  
broke into a fat man's range.

Four more kids came down.  
Well, not really kids; they weren't about  
to be clamped by a cop.  
The water now was ankle deep,  
and in the lights it came on like sheets.  
Eight more kids were on the field,  
and one with a beard slid and splashed  
the whole way from second to third.  
With a great whoosh he stole home.  
Sixteen kids danced onto the field.  
They lined up at second then peeled off  
and everyone made like Pete Rose  
going into the plate. Thirty-two more  
charged out of the stands  
filling the bases.

Then it was our turn.  
Me and the old man went charging out.  
We did somersaults for a warm up.  
The old man slid into the mound,  
me right behind him.  
We stole second, third, home.  
We heard the p.a. calling the game.  
The old man said hell  
we still had last licks.  
We squeezed our cuffs and pants  
and then my aged father tore into a sprint,  
and me right behind in his wake,  
we went all the way  
and slid right up against  
the centerfield fence.

—*Paul Marx*

## Drumbeat Deer

The drum echoed in my brain  
As the heartbeat of a deer against the hunter.  
The quick pulsing of the drummer's blood,  
The rapid fleeing of a hunted deer.  
Vast assortment of a percussionist's tingling bells,  
So assorted are the muscles of a deer.  
Intricate patterns forming a melody,  
Muscles working together yielding speed, grace, and life.  
Veins stretching up a beating arm  
Taut nerves tensed in waiting.  
Explosion of a drumskin, dead air—  
Explosion of a pelt, oozing blood.  
The final note in a song,  
The final breath of life.

— *Christina Kolf*

## Time

Life is drifting as a river with branches.

—Slow down and observe.

There is a bird whistling in the trees above.

—Move along with your world.

You, dancing in the treetops. Yeah! Your world dancing  
apart in another space in time with harmony.

On the distant streets of hell the war goes on towards peace  
and friendship with life.

Oh yeah! Life with its arms of a diversified nature to all.

The angel dancing in the treetops calling on life as if it  
were a division of peace and hell in a ball spinning.

It's as if the universe as a whole was trying to speak out,  
and tell all of its secrets.

Opening Pandora's box and finding it empty. To the unob-  
servant eye,

To the seeker of truth, there is a twister in my heart

And it's an answer with no answer, a question with no question.

And then I'm shot out of a closeness with no understanding.

It's a heartthrob and then it transcends into darkness.

You look on into a hayfield, and it turns out to be weeds.

A mirage of beauty, love, life, understanding, and then right  
back into hell.

The only key to the lock, the only key to the box is in the  
mind.

And the only answer is drifting along the river with branches,

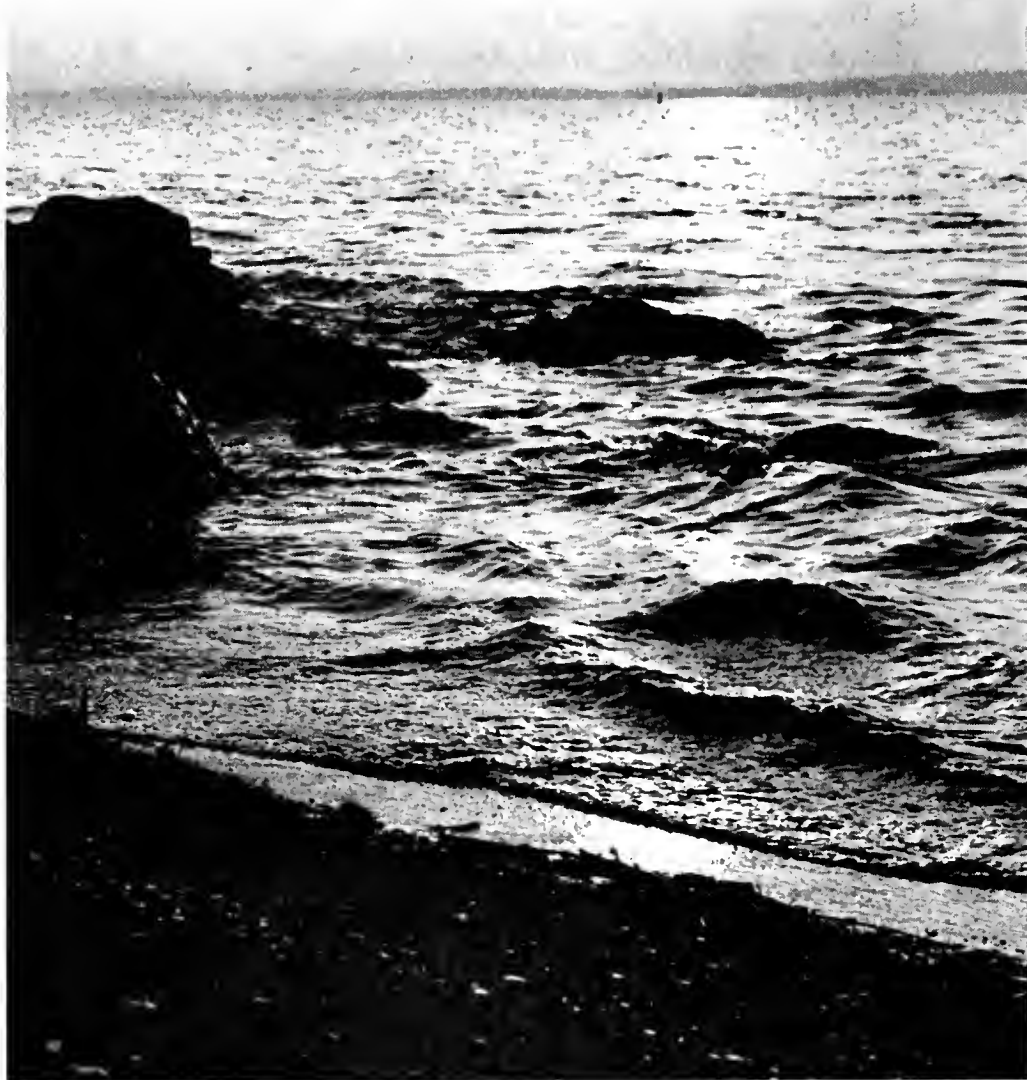
As to find an answer is to seek all fingers of life.

—James Christopher Cox  
and  
Leapin Rosinski

## Connections by Moonlight

The mind haunts old reflective surfaces  
Polished by half-memories of clues.  
The moon for two nights running now has perched  
Up on the gable of the house next door,  
So large and luminous that the bare eye  
Can see the crater floors and storm-crossed seas.  
I scour the textured surface of that disk.  
In Hungary tonight an aged man,  
Devoted spelunker, steps from a cave,  
His sample sack half full. He searches the terrain  
For moonlit fragments glimmering in the dust.

— *Martha Ravits*



**Cold Sunset**

— *Nancy Raver*



### **Apostrophe to the End of a Beach Day**

Turn, scarlet woman, standing in sunset  
There on the sand flats where I observe you  
Gathering radiance into your basket,  
Binding down loose rays into your wire net,  
Eclipsing shadow, hoarding each frail gleam,  
Out where the gulls call, there where the ocean heaves,  
Grieves for departing day, carried over the earth's rim.

— *Martha Ravits*

## Flores por los Muertos

Flores por los muertos  
shroud the gray sky  
a small eternity that  
touched and wound,  
circled,  
died  
as every minute echos and  
shrieks  
in the throats of madmen and  
slaves.

We are the mad souls  
souls of the children  
strangled at Auschwitz  
screams lying stagnant in  
pools of disguise.

Flores por los muertos—  
We are not even the dead  
but the castless shadows  
in the game of *Go*  
the stone game,  
the ice game,  
and the suicide on Grusha's  
bridge  
while Charon laughs on the river Styx  
We press to cross.

What a crossing we had  
from blood into life  
from life to the ground.  
What a crossing it is  
wound and wound and

Flores por los muertos, los muertos  
that gaze with raging  
eyes  
behind the gauze  
in the haze  
of the sun  
beating down  
heat and mirage.

Flowers for the dead  
to smell sweet on the grave  
the corpse's decay . . .  
And a  
face  
that the water has  
washed  
away.

— *Shariann Lewitt*

### **Bach's Fugues**

Like the touch of  
a lover's eyelash  
between my breasts  
that freezes with anticipation  
of the delicate counterpoint  
of five fingers  
tracing pearls on my thigh  
and evaporates  
with a breath in my ear.

—*Shariann Lewitt*

## **I'll Take Pastrami**

the day repeats  
like a pastrami sandwich  
tantalizing smells  
gobbled up like a vacuum cleaner  
until i ache  
with indigestion  
but i love the taste  
and go back for more  
my hunger  
never satisfied  
your love repeats  
like the day  
filling me up  
like a stuffed bird  
until i ache  
with indigestion  
but i love the taste  
and go back for more  
my hunger  
never satisfied

—*Karen Kmetzo*

## There Was a Time

There was a time once  
before  
my heart stood like the skeleton  
of a tree silhouetted  
in the gray space a breath leaves  
in its going.

There was a time once  
before  
my fingers fell to bone  
before they found the space of your words  
forming skeletons  
in the hollow of your throat.

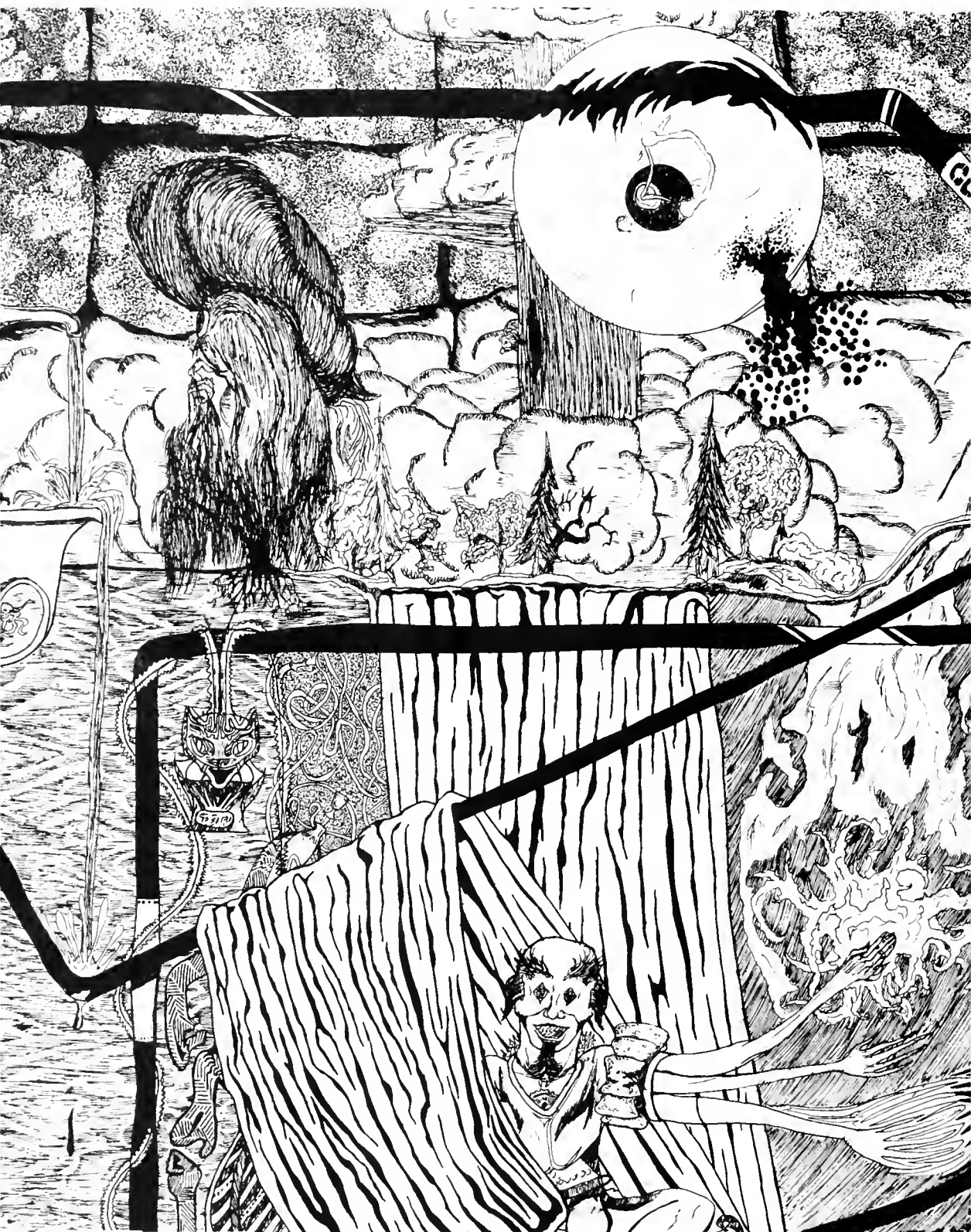
There was a time once  
before  
my tongue curled like a fish  
in the space your legs made  
before it grew scales, bony protrusions, teeth,  
before it found its own way up the river  
spawned skeleton shadows  
like wounds  
the place of stones  
embedded in flesh.

—*Jessica Drew*

## Visions of Darkness or Light

Desolation—boulevard  
Procrastination—poets  
Sun-fighter—Grace Slick  
Heebie-Jeebie—Son of God  
Catwalk—stairway  
Fucker—Mommy  
Johnny—Brother  
Straight-down—way-out  
Light—burnt  
Fire—struck  
Moon—nowhere  
Speech—free world  
Out—cast  
Plato—the last word.

— *James Christopher Cox*



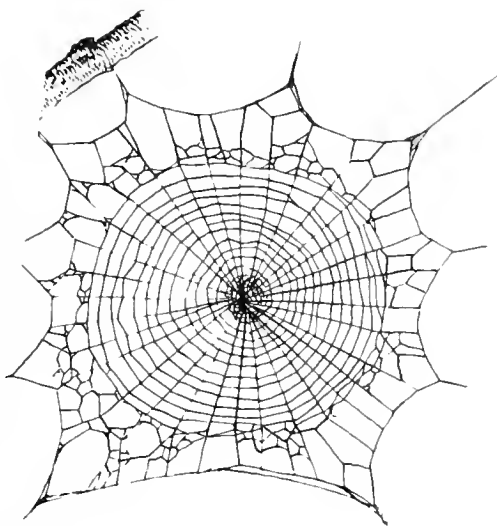
It Relates

— Tim O'Brien



## Notes on Contributors

JANICE BERUBE is currently working in Alumni Relations at the University of New Haven. She is a free lance writer and poet, who received her B.S. degree in English from Central Connecticut State College and is now pursuing a masters' degree at UNH.



DEBORAH BURNS, a sophomore social welfare major at the University of New Haven, has been writing since the age of 12. Although her pieces are based on emotions she has felt, her writing sustains her.

LENNY CAVALLARO, a member of the music faculty at UNH, is a concert pianist with a doctor of musical arts degree. He was a prize-winner at the 1975 International Bach Competition and has performed in Carnegie Hall. He has written articles on boxing, chess, and nutrition, along with some experimental fiction, and is a music critic for the *New Haven Register*.

ELIA V. CHEPAITIS is from Rhode Island, where she and her husband have a cabin deep in the woods. She has taught European history at the University of New Haven and Albertus Magnus and is writing her doctoral dissertation. She has published poems at Manhattanville and Georgetown, where she earned degrees in Russian Area Studies.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER COX considers Jack Kerouac his favorite writer and hopes to do graduate work in English after graduation from the University of New Haven. He has given poetry readings in the New Haven area at such places as Down to Earth Restaurant and the New Haven Historical Society.

JESSICA DREW is a poet with a many-sided personality, who enjoys puzzles and spins webs.

ESTHER M. FRIESNER holds a Ph.D. in Spanish from Yale. Poetry is just one of her many interests. She has tried her hand at science fiction, fantasy, novels, and short stories, and has also done tolerably well as a cartoonist.

MICHELE KLOTZER, a third year communication major, recently transferred to the University of New Haven from Western Connecticut State College in Danbury. She has been writing poetry for about five years. Her main interests are creative writing and public relations.

KAREN KMETZO has been writing poetry for a little over a year. She is an English major at UNH taking independent studies in creative writing. She is a New Haven native, is interested in Eastern philosophy, classical music, and racquetball, and plans to make writing her career.

CHRISTINA KOLF is a student at UNH who transferred from Western Connecticut State College. She has studied creative writing, loves music, and is a prolific poet who occasionally wears a cowboy hat.

SHARIANN LEWITT is a playwright who received her M.F.A. from the Yale School of Drama. A natural leaning for the dramatic is expressed in her riotous red hair. She has had poetry published in the *Red Fox Review* and her plays have been produced in New York and Seattle.


PAUL MARX, chairman of the English department of the University of New Haven, used to live and die with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Now when he goes to Shea he has fun.

TIM O'BRIEN is a second year communication student at UNH. He was born and raised in Bridgeport and has a strong interest in writing and drawing. He has a sometimes bizarre sense of humor and is known to his friends as Captain Video.

NANCY RAVER, a communication major in her sophomore year at the University of New Haven, was born in New Haven and grew up in Woodbridge, Ct. Her main interests are filmmaking, writing, and photography. She enjoys the photography of Alfred Stieglitz and surrealist paintings.

MARTHA RAVITS is a visiting assistant professor of English at UNH. She has lived in Minnesota, California, Germany, and Hamden and remembers a more balanced life somewhere along the line, to which she finds it impossible to return.

LEAPIN ROSINSKI was born in 1957. He has grown up all over the United States and now resides in the small coal-mining town of Kelayres, Pa. His interests include the *I Ching*, trapping, and mechanics of all sorts. He has been self-educated since high school.

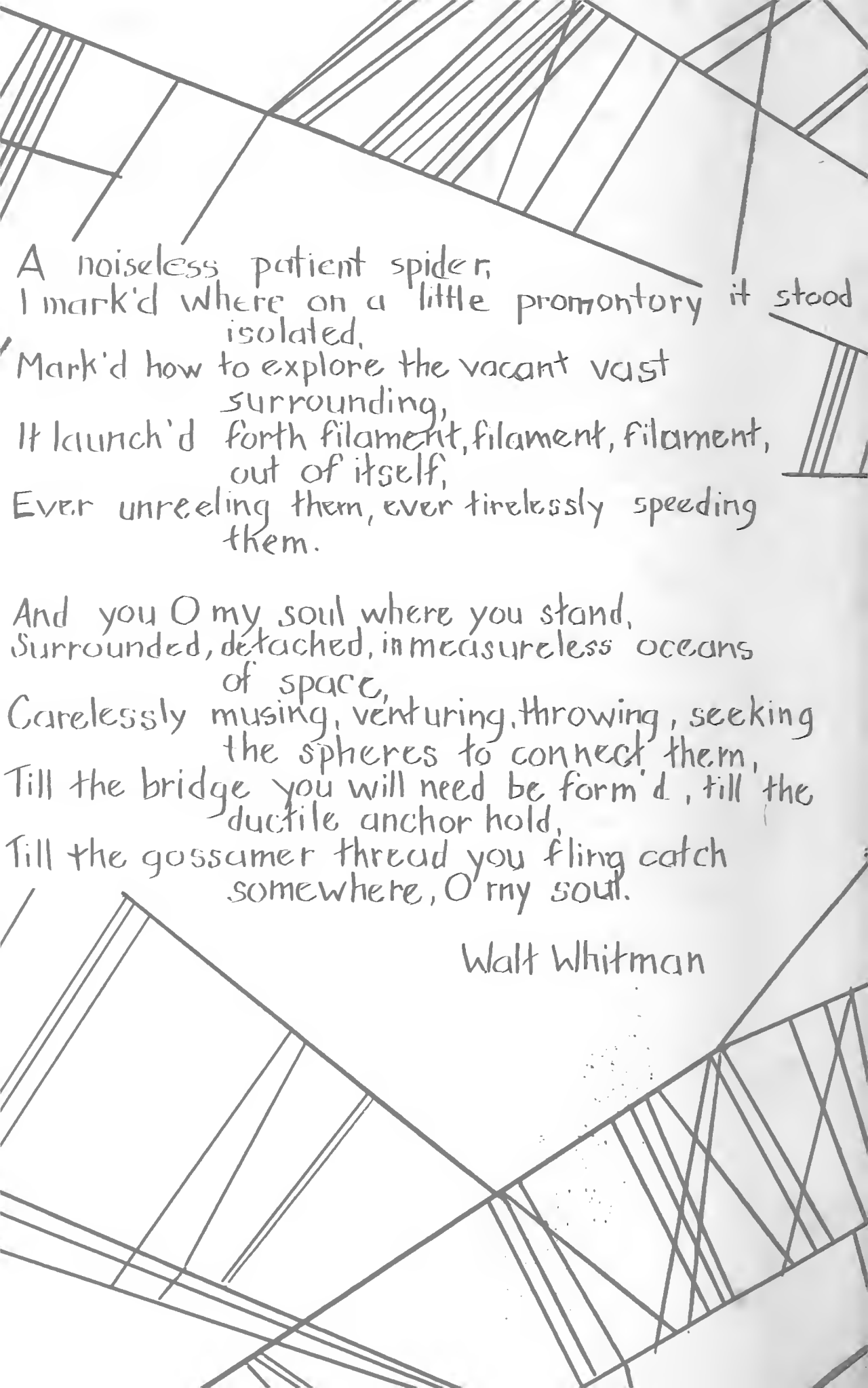


*"Like the spider, I return again  
and again to the task, conscious  
that the web I am spinning is  
made of my own substance, that it  
will never fail me, never run dry."*

— HENRY MILLER  
in *"Reflections on Writing"*

## EDITORIAL BOARD

James Christopher Cox—Co-editor  
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Karen Kmetzo  
Tim O'Brien  
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Professor Martha Ravits—Faculty Advisor



A noiseless patient spider,  
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood  
isolated,  
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast  
surrounding,  
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament,  
out of itself,  
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding  
them.

And you O my soul where you stand,  
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans  
of space,  
Carelessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking  
the spheres to connect them,  
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the  
ductile anchor hold,  
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch  
somewhere, O my soul.

Walt Whitman